

February 1, 2023 | Myanmar

Over 20 international oilfield services companies active in Myanmar since coup attempt

A Justice For Myanmar [investigation](#) using open source and leaked documents has identified 22 international oilfield services companies active in Myanmar since the military's illegal attempted coup.

The oil and gas sector in Myanmar is illegally controlled by the junta and is its biggest source of foreign revenue, bankrolling the military's ongoing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

These oilfield services companies provide critical support and equipment to the sector, from drilling to maintenance to supply. By doing so, they help to keep the gas revenues flowing to the junta, making them complicit in its international crimes.

8 of the companies identified are either fully or partially based in the USA, including the biggest companies in the sector: Halliburton, Schlumberger and Baker Hughes, which have branch offices in Myanmar that remain active.

Tax filings for the first year of the military's coup attempt, provided by Distributed Denial of Secrets, show earnings in the millions of US dollars.

The activities of US oilfield services companies have been encouraged by the failure of the US government to sanction Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE), an agency illegally controlled by the junta.

While the [US](#) sanctioned the junta's energy minister and MOGE managing director and deputy managing director to mark the second anniversary of the military's illegal coup attempt, it stopped short of designating MOGE the entity.

MOGE regulates the sector and acts as both a state revenue collector and commercial partner in oil and gas projects, ensuring the junta gets lucrative tax and royalty payments, as well as a vast share of profits.

Concerningly, the continued presence of US companies has been encouraged by the US Department of Commerce's [International Trade Administration](#), which lists the oil and gas industry in Myanmar as a "best prospect industry" and encourages US companies to seek opportunities, including applying for junta tenders.

With the [National Defense Authorization Act](#) signed into law in December, the US must act now and impose sanction on MOGE, in coordination with its allies the UK, Canada and Australia.

Oilfield services companies outside the EU, where sanctions on MOGE are already in place, must uphold their international law and due diligence responsibilities and stop their activities in Myanmar unless the projects they are working on suspend payments to the junta, and withhold them in protected accounts.

Justice For Myanmar spokesperson Yadanar Maung says: “Oilfield services companies in Myanmar have blood on their hands for operating in an industry that bankrolls the illegal Myanmar military junta, as it wages a campaign of terror against the people.

“It is deplorable that giants such as Halliburton, Diamond Offshore Drilling and Schlumberger that are listed on US stock exchanges have maintained operations in Myanmar, helping to keep oil and gas revenue flowing to the junta. Their business has helped the junta purchase the bullets, bombs and jet fuel that it needs for its indiscriminate attacks.

“These companies have breached their international legal responsibilities and are complicit in the junta’s war crimes and crimes against humanity by knowingly servicing oil and gas projects that fund the junta’s atrocities.

“We call on all oilfield services companies to suspend operations on projects that are funding the junta.

“The activities of US oilfield services companies following the military’s coup attempt demonstrates a failure of the US Government to take decisive action against the junta and its terror campaign by sanctioning MOGE.

“The Biden Administration’s contradictory approach to Myanmar has allowed US oil and gas corporations to continue business as usual in Myanmar, enabling the junta’s international crimes.

“While the Department of State has warned that dealing with MOGE risks money laundering, furthering corruption and contributing to serious human rights violations, the US Department of Commerce is advising US companies to seek profits in the oil and gas sectors in Myanmar and to compete for MOGE tenders.

“We call on the US and its allies Australia, Canada and the UK to stand with the people of Myanmar by imposing sanctions on MOGE and helping to cut the flow of funds to the junta.”

More information:

Read our feature on oilfield services companies linked to the junta [here](#)

[Justice For Myanmar](#), a group of covert activists campaigning for justice and accountability for the people of Myanmar, is calling for an end to military business and for federal democracy and a sustainable peace.

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